

Gurnee, IL —Today, Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08) was joined by Miss America 2007 Lauren Nelson and Tom Iannitti, Director of Government Relations for i-SAFE, at two events promoting internet safety. At 10:00 AM in Chicago they announced the reintroduction of Bean's SAFER NET Act (H.R. 1008). At 12:00 PM they spoke to nearly 1,000 Gurnee middle school students about avoiding online dangers. As more kids and teens frequently encounter potential predators and other threats online – including several reported cases in the Chicagoland area – Nelson joined Bean on Friday as the Congresswoman continued her work to implement a national effort to provide valuable information for concerned parents and help them deal with these new challenges.

A national leader on internet safety, Bean introduced the first comprehensive online safety bill last year. As part of her ongoing efforts to combat cybercrime and raise community awareness, Bean has provided internet safety advice to parents and kids at public forums across the 8th District. The event today with Miss Nelson is Bean's 15th such forum. She has reintroduced her legislation, which would educate families on a national scale by improving access to internet safety information and raising public awareness about online dangers.

The Miss America Organization requires each contestant to select a relevant, current issue about which she is passionate. Nelson's chosen platform is protecting children from online predators. During her teens, Nelson had a close call with a potential online predator who sent inappropriate material over the internet. As Miss America, Nelson uses her stature to spotlight the dangers potentially awaiting children allowed to surf the internet unsupervised, and she actively campaigns for statutes to protect children online. She delivers commonsense ideas and a passionate belief in her cause to audiences of all ages.

i-SAFE is a leading internet safety education organization – a non-profit foundation whose mission is to help students avoid dangerous, inappropriate or unlawful online behavior. Using school curriculum and outreach programs to parents, law enforcement and community leaders, it is the only internet safety foundation to combine these elements to encourage safe and responsible internet use. From this expert perspective, Iannitti offered additional specific suggestions for parents on ways to keep kids safe from internet dangers.

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